



South Carolina
Department of Commerce
Site Certification Program
Description and Instructions



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Questionnaires for Step I – Step IV are located at
www.SCcommerce.com.

South Carolina Department of Commerce Site Certification Program Description and Instructions

The Department of Commerce has a site certification program to accomplish the following:

- provide prospects with additional site data and assure that certain minimum information is available on a site;
- assist the communities in determining the marketability of existing sites; and
- provide a structured step-by-step process certifying sites.

A Certified Industrial Site is defined as a site of at least 20 acres that can support a minimum of 50,000 square feet of building space on a single level and meets the standards of the site certification program.

Local development organizations would be self-reporting. It is suggested that an engineering organization or civil engineer be retained to compile the necessary information, correctly fill out the appropriate forms, and submit it to the Department of Commerce. Upon submission, it will be reviewed by the Department of Commerce for certification. Written notification will be forwarded to the county economic development organization.

Where to Send Certification Questionnaires

All questionnaires can be sent to:

S.C. Department of Commerce
Certified Site Program
1201 Main Street, Suite 1600
Columbia, SC 29201-3200
Phone - (803) 737-0400

Instructions for Completing Step I

1. Verification of an industrial site – A site is considered “verified” when a Department of Commerce Site Questionnaire is completely filled out, signed by the owner of the site, and submitted and signed by the director of the economic development authority for the respective county. This certification is good for one year unless otherwise stipulated by the Department of Commerce Community & Rural Planning and Development Division.

If a site is not verified, a site questionnaire can be obtained from the Manager, Buildings and Sites with the Division of Community & Rural Planning and Development at the Department of Commerce. The questionnaire should be completed in full, signed by the appropriate individuals and submitted as stated above. However, all certified sites must have a definitive sale price and commitment by owner to sell to be considered a SC Department of Commerce certified site. The site is considered “verified” when posted on the Department of Commerce web site (www.sccommerce.com).

2. Site zoning and zoning of surrounding property – Local development organizations can determine if a site is conducive for industrial development or another type of development by the zoning of the site. Listing the nearby land use will also help determine if the site is conducive for industrial development.

To meet the site zoning requirement for certification, please respond to the section on site zoning on the Step I questionnaire as appropriate.

3. Right-of-way information – Please include on the Step I questionnaire as appropriate:
 - right-of-way,
 - encumbrances,
 - liens,
 - judgment; and
 - restrictive covenants of the site.
4. Fire rating of site – Knowing the fire rating of a site is a necessity to a local economic developer. Businesses want to know what fire service will be available to the site, the

proximity of the nearest fire department, and the classification of the nearest fire department for insurance purposes.

To meet the fire rating requirement for certification, please respond to the fire rating question as to the type of fire rating the site has.

5. Mapping – At a minimum, the following maps must be included in the site certification documents to certify the site:

- highway map;
- county tax map
- flood plain map
- USGS Topographic Map
- Soil Conservation Service Soils Map; and
- National Wetlands Inventory Map.

Instructions for Completing Step II

1. Water infrastructure – To meet certification, local development organizations must give DOC data on the Step II questionnaire on capacity for water and the provider of service.

Required data needed are listed below:

- provider of service;
- size of existing line;
- distance to the site;
- static and residual pressures in the vicinity of the site;
- location and capacity of closest elevated and/or ground storage tank;
- Location of booster pump station, if applicable;
- source of water (well or surface water);
- South Carolina Water System Number for water system;
- permitted capacity;
- allocated capacity; and
- excess capacity.

For wet processing such as foods, chemicals, or pharmaceutical preparation, excess capacity should be one million gallons/day or more. For other types of manufacturing, distribution, or mixed use, excess capacity can be less.

2. Wastewater infrastructure – To meet certification, local development organizations must give DOC data on the Step II questionnaire on capacity for wastewater and the provider of service.

Required data needed are listed below:

- provider of service;
- size of existing line;
- distance to the site;
- if pumped system, provide size of force main;
- capacity of lift station (permitted and available capacity);
- NPDES Permit Number of treatment facility accepting wastewater and DHEC wastewater load allocation;
- permitted capacity;
- allocated capacity;
- excess capacity; and

- pre-treatment requirements.

For wet processing such as foods, chemicals, or pharmaceutical preparation, excess capacity should be one million gallons/day or more. For other types of manufacturing, distribution, or mixed use, excess capacity can be less.

3. Transportation infrastructure - Local development organizations should indicate on the Step II questionnaire the type of transportation infrastructure existing to the site.

Please include the following:

- location of closest county road and state highway/US highway;
- number of lanes and width of roadway;
- statement detailing the roadways capacity of sustaining loads of 80,000 lbs, 20,000 lbs per axle (HS-20 Loading);
- weight limit of bridge if applicable; and
- cost and schedule for extending/improving roadway access to the site.

Acceptable transportation infrastructure would be that the site is within five miles of an interstate interchange or four-lane road.

Dirt roads are not acceptable transportation infrastructure.

4. Rail access – Please indicate the following on the Step II questionnaire:

- rail availability to the site;
- the provider of service; and
- rail rating (e.g. 263,000, 286,000, or 315,000 gross lbs).

5. Telecommunications infrastructure – Local development organizations should indicate the following on the Step II questionnaire:

- telecommunications provider;
- broadband availability;
- existence of digital switching; and
- existence of fiber optics.

6. Electricity infrastructure – Local development organizations should indicate the following on the Step II questionnaire:

- service provider;
- availability of 3-phase service; and
- location of transmission service, and/or distribution service.

Local developers should also indicate if dual/independent feed is available at the site. This service is an added feature.

7. Natural gas infrastructure – Local development organizations should indicate the following on the Step II questionnaire:

- transmission service provider;
- location of transmission service;
- size of the line and PSI (pounds per square inch);
- distribution service provider;
- location of distribution service; and
- size of the line and PSI (pounds per square inch).

If the transmission and/or distribution service is not within one mile, local development organizations should have a commitment from their local natural gas provider to provide either service for a user requiring gas for their process.

8. Additional infrastructure information - If any components of the infrastructure are not currently in place, in order to progress to the next step, local development organizations must have a plan to extend the service to the site. The plan should include estimates for distance, cost, size of line, and estimated time to extend service to the site. This information should be provided and attached as a part of the Step II questionnaire.

Local development organizations are not required to contract with an engineering company to complete these plans, but are encouraged to interact with appropriate utility providers to develop future plans.

Instructions for Completing Step III

1. Maximum contiguous usable acres – To determine the maximum contiguous usable acres, local development organizations should walk the site thoroughly and identify all areas not separated by roads, creeks, rivers, ponds, and other areas where water drainage may be an issue.

Once these areas are identified, local development organizations can determine the maximum contiguous usable acres that can be assembled easily and cost effectively. The local development organizations would then report the number of acres on the Step III questionnaire.

2. Preliminary wetland assessment – This should be performed to identify potential jurisdictional wetlands and “other waters of the United States” which may be present on the project site. This assessment should consist of a review of readily attainable information concerning wetlands and “other waters of the United States” located on the project site. A cursory site reconnaissance should be performed to visually observe the project site for obvious evidence of wetlands and “other waters of the United States.” Field observations and data obtained from the review process should be mapped for a graphic depiction of the wetland areas observed on the project site. The purpose of the assessment is to generate a map of the project site depicting the approximate locations of wetlands and “other waters of the United States,” without delineating the upland/wetland boundary as described in the 1987 United States Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) Wetlands Delineation Manual.

NOTE: If the consulting engineer determines that the proposed site exhibits no obvious evidence of wetlands, the consulting engineer will provide the local developer with a written statement to that effect.

However, if the consulting engineer determines that the site or portion(s) of the site to be developed indicate evidence of wetlands, then the decision should be made to delineate location(s) of wetlands in accordance with the 1987 United States Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) Wetlands Delineation Manual for the purpose of obtaining an ACOE Jurisdictional Determination.

Once this study has been performed, please indicate so on the Step III questionnaire and the date of the study.

3. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) – To complete this study, local development organizations must work with an environmental or engineering firm that performs these services. The Phase I ESA should be performed in accordance with ASTM Standard E1527-05. If there is indication of a recognized environmental concern, a Phase II ESA will be required to certify the site.
4. Endangered species - Local development organizations must also request the environmental or engineering firm performing the ESA to identify possible endangered species on the site.

Once the local developers have this study completed, they would need to indicate this information on the Step III questionnaire.

5. Archeological Investigation or Cultural Resources Reconnaissance Survey - Local development organizations must also request the environmental or engineering firm performing the ESA to identify possible cultural/archeological artifacts on the site.

Once the local developers have this study completed, they would need to indicate this information on the Step III questionnaire.

6. Additional information - Several reliable environmental or engineering groups are located throughout the state. The South Carolina Economic Developers Association's (SCEDA) website provides names of firms to perform the studies. The link is www.sceda.org. Click on "Networking/Events" on the main web page then "Sponsored Links."

Instructions for Completing Step IV

1. Geotechnical study – A study should be performed that indicates the following:
 - soil characteristics of the site are compatible with industrial development including conducting soil borings;
 - obtaining a site specific seismic activity and classification based on a soil boring of 100 feet;
 - establishing depth to groundwater at time of boring;
 - suitability of on-site soils for building pad and roadway subgrade;
 - discussion of soil augmentation if required and cost estimates for same; and
 - discussion of liquefaction potential of soils.

To obtain this type of information, local development organizations may wish to contact the same environmental or engineering firms they used to complete the Phase I Environmental Study. Once this study is complete, please respond to the Step IV questionnaire including the date of the study.

2. Color aerial photo of the site – The type of photo should be a to-scale low altitude aerial oblique, showing the site and surrounding acreage. This scaled aerial photo of the site will serve as an up to date planning and promotional tool for the site.
3. Wetlands delineation and survey – Wetlands delineation and survey must be performed on the site. It should be indicated, along with the date it was completed, on the Step IV questionnaire.
4. Deed – Local development organizations should indicate on the Step IV questionnaire if a copy of the deed to the property is included. A purchase option to the benefit of the local economic development organization will suffice for a copy of the deed. The expiration of the option must be given and the certification will expire with the option expiration if not extended or renewed.
5. Recordable boundary survey – A recordable boundary survey must be performed on the site as part of the site certification process. Boundary surveys show the official surveyed

boundary lines of property certified by a South Carolina licensed surveyor. The boundary survey should meet the requirements of the State Plat Law for Class "A" Surveys, and be tied to the S.C. State Plane Coordinate System NAD 1983.

6. Topographic Survey – A topographic survey must be performed on the site as part of the site certification process. A topographic map is not acceptable for this step of the certification. This survey can be either an aerial survey or a conventional field survey. Topographic surveys show the contour elevations of the site. The maximum contour interval for the topographic survey shall be 2 feet.